

Senate Bill No. 940

CHAPTER 275

An act to amend Sections 68085 and 77205 of the Government Code, and to amend Section 1463.010 of the Penal Code, relating to courts.

[Approved by Governor September 3, 2003. Filed with Secretary of State September 4, 2003.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 940, Escutia. Courts: fines and penalties: collection.

(1) Under existing law, the Judicial Council may authorize the direct payment or reimbursement of actual costs to one or more trial courts from the Trial Court Trust Fund in order to promote statewide efficiency, as specified, upon appropriation thereof in the Budget Act.

This bill would expand this authorization to payments or reimbursements, not to exceed a specified limit, from the Trial Court Improvement Fund to fund administrative infrastructure within the Administrative Office of the Courts, as specified.

(2) Under existing law, a court is authorized to order fines, fees, penalties, surcharges, or assessments, under varying circumstances. Existing law provides a procedure for the collection of these fines, fees, penalties, surcharges, and assessments, by the courts and counties.

This bill would require the Judicial Council to establish a specified collaborative court-county working group and adopt guidelines for a comprehensive program for the collection of moneys imposed by court order, as specified. The bill would authorize the Judicial Council to establish standard agreements for the collection thereof. The bill would require each superior court and county to develop a cooperative plan to implement these guidelines, and to jointly and annually report to the Judicial Council in relation. The bill would require the Judicial Council to report to the Legislature, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of this program. The bill would also permit the Judicial Council to suspend professional licenses and establish an amnesty program to waive the interest or collections costs on outstanding fines or assessments, upon specified circumstances.

(3) Existing law requires the state to assume the sole responsibility for funding court operations. Existing law requires a county to distribute fee, fine, and forfeiture revenue between the county or city and county and the state, as specified.

This bill would require a specified portion of the revenues distributed to the Trial Court Improvement Fund to be allocated by the Judicial

Council, as specified, among the trial courts or to be retained in the Trial Court Improvement Fund, as specified.

(4) By imposing additional duties on local officials, the bill would create a state-mandated local program.

(5) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 68085 of the Government Code is amended to read:

68085. (a) (1) There is hereby established the Trial Court Trust Fund, the proceeds of which shall be apportioned at least quarterly for the purpose of funding trial court operations, as defined in Section 77003. Apportionment payments may not exceed 30 percent of the total annual apportionment to the Trial Court Trust Fund for state trial court funding in any 90-day period.

(2) The apportionment payments shall be made by the Controller. The final payment from the Trial Court Trust Fund for each fiscal year shall be made on or before August 31 of the subsequent fiscal year.

(3) If apportionment payments are made on a quarterly basis, the payments shall be on July 15, October 15, January 15, and April 15. In addition to quarterly payments, a final payment from the Trial Court Trust Fund for each fiscal year may be made on or before August 31 of the subsequent fiscal year.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in order to promote statewide efficiency, the Judicial Council may authorize the direct payment or reimbursement or both of actual costs from the Trial Court Trust Fund or the Trial Court Improvement Fund to fund administrative infrastructure within the Administrative Office of the Courts, such as legal services, financial services, information systems services, human resource services, and support services, for one or more participating courts upon appropriation of funding for these purposes in the annual Budget Act. The amount of appropriations from the Trial Court Improvement Fund under this subdivision may not exceed 20 percent of



the amount deposited in the Trial Court Improvement Fund pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 77205. Upon prior written approval of the Director of Finance, the Judicial Council may also authorize an increase in any reimbursements or direct payments in excess of the amount appropriated in the annual Budget Act. For any increases in reimbursements or direct payments within the fiscal year that exceed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000), the Director of Finance shall provide notification in writing of any approval granted under this section, not less than 30 days prior to the effective date of that approval, to the chairperson of the committee in each house of the Legislature that considers appropriations, the chairpersons of the committees and the appropriate subcommittees in each house of the Legislature that consider the annual Budget Act, and the Chairperson of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, or not sooner than whatever lesser time the Chairperson of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, or his or her designee, may in each instance, determine. The direct payment or reimbursement of costs from the Trial Court Trust Fund may be supported by the reduction of a participating court's allocation from the Trial Court Trust Fund to the extent that the court's expenditures for the program are reduced and the court is supported by the program. The Judicial Council shall provide the affected trial courts with quarterly reports on expenditures from the Trial Court Trust Fund incurred as authorized by this subdivision. The Judicial Council shall establish procedures to provide for the administration of this paragraph in a way that promotes the effective, efficient, reliable, and accountable operation of the trial courts.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the fees listed in subdivision (c) shall all be deposited upon collection in a special account in the county treasury, and transmitted monthly to the Controller for deposit in the Trial Court Trust Fund.

(c) (1) Except as specified in subdivision (d), this section applies to all fees collected pursuant to Sections 631.3, 116.230, and 403.060 of the Code of Civil Procedure and Sections 26820.4, 26823, 26826, 26826.01, 26827, 26827.4, 26830, 26832.1, 26833.1, 26835.1, 26836.1, 26837.1, 26838, 26850.1, 26851.1, 26852.1, 26853.1, 26855.4, 26862, 27081.5, 68086, 72055, 72056, 72056.01, and 72060.

(2) If any of the fees provided for in this subdivision are partially waived by court order, and the fee is to be divided between the Trial Court Trust Fund and any other fund, the amount of the partial waiver shall be deducted from the amount to be distributed to each fund in the same proportion as the amount of each distribution bears to the total amount of the fee.



(3) Any amounts transmitted by a county to the Controller for deposit into the Trial Court Trust Fund from fees collected pursuant to Section 27361 between January 1, 1998, and the effective date of this paragraph shall be credited against the total amount the county is required to pay to the state pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 77201 for the 1997–98 fiscal year.

(d) This section does not apply to that portion of a filing fee collected pursuant to Section 26820.4, 26826, 26827, 72055, or 72056 which is allocated for dispute resolution pursuant to Section 470.3 of the Business and Professions Code, the county law library pursuant to Section 6320 of the Business and Professions Code, the Judges' Retirement Fund pursuant to Section 26822.3, automated recordkeeping or conversion to micrographics pursuant to Sections 26863 and 68090.7, and courthouse financing pursuant to Section 76238. This section also does not apply to fees collected pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (c) of Section 27361.

(e) This section applies to all payments required to be made to the State Treasury by any county or city and county pursuant to Section 77201, 77201.1, or 77205.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no agency may take action to change the amounts allocated to any of the funds described in subdivision (a), (b), (c), or (d).

(g) Before making any apportionments under this section, the Controller shall deduct, from the annual appropriation for that purpose, the actual administrative costs that will be incurred under this section. Costs reimbursed under this section shall be determined on an annual basis in consultation with the Judicial Council.

(h) Any amounts required to be transmitted by a county or city and county to the state pursuant to this section shall be remitted to the Controller no later than 45 days after the end of the month in which the fees were collected. This remittance shall be accompanied by a remittance advice identifying the collection month and the appropriate account in the Trial Court Trust Fund to which it is to be deposited. Any remittance which is not made by the county or city and county in accordance with this section shall be considered delinquent, and subject to the penalties specified in this section.

(i) Upon receipt of any delinquent payment required pursuant to this section, the Controller shall calculate a penalty on any delinquent payment by multiplying the amount of the delinquent payment at a daily rate equivalent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent per month for the number of days the payment is delinquent. Notwithstanding Section 77009, any penalty on a delinquent payment that a court is required to reimburse to a county's



general fund pursuant to this section and Section 24353 shall be paid from the Trial Court Operations Fund for that court.

(j) Penalty amounts calculated pursuant to subdivision (i) shall be paid by the county to the Trial Court Trust Fund no later than 45 days after the end of the month in which the penalty was calculated.

(k) The Trial Court Trust Fund shall be invested in the Surplus Money Investment Fund and all interest earned shall be allocated to the Trial Court Trust Fund semiannually and shall be allocated among the courts in accordance with the requirements of subdivision (a). The specific allocations shall be specified by the Judicial Council, based upon recommendations from the Trial Court Budget Commission.

(l) It is the intent of the Legislature that the revenues required to be deposited into the Trial Court Trust Fund be remitted as soon after collection by the courts as possible. Not later than February 1, 2001, the Judicial Council, in consultation with the California State Association of Counties and the California County Auditors Association, shall study and make recommendations to the Legislature on alternative procedures that would improve the collection and remittance of revenues to the Trial Court Trust Fund.

SEC. 2. Section 77205 of the Government Code is amended to read:

77205. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any year in which a county collects fee, fine, and forfeiture revenue for deposit into the county general fund pursuant to Sections 1463.001 and 1464 of the Penal Code, Sections 42007, 42007.1, and 42008 of the Vehicle Code, and Sections 27361 and 76000 of, and subdivision (f) of Section 29550 of, the Government Code that would have been deposited into the General Fund pursuant to these sections as they read on December 31, 1997, and pursuant to Section 1463.07 of the Penal Code, and that exceeds the amount specified in paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 77201 for the 1997–98 fiscal year, and paragraph (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 77201.1 for the 1998–99 fiscal year, and thereafter, the excess amount shall be divided between the county or city and county and the state, with 50 percent of the excess transferred to the state for deposit in the Trial Court Improvement Fund and 50 percent of the excess deposited into the county general fund. The Judicial Council, by court rule, shall allocate 80 percent of the amount deposited in the Trial Court Improvement Fund pursuant to this subdivision each fiscal year that exceeds the amount deposited in the 2002–03 fiscal year among:

(1) The trial court in the county from which the revenue was deposited.

(2) Other trial courts, as provided in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 68085.



(3) For retention in the Trial Court Improvement Fund.

For the purpose of this subdivision, fee, fine, and forfeiture revenue shall only include revenue that would otherwise have been deposited in the General Fund prior to January 1, 1998.

(b) Any amounts required to be distributed to the state pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be remitted to the Controller no later than 45 days after the end of the fiscal year in which those fees, fines, and forfeitures were collected. This remittance shall be accompanied by a remittance advice identifying the quarter of collection and stating that the amount should be deposited in the Trial Court Improvement Fund.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), the following counties whose base-year remittance requirement was reduced pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 77201.1 shall not be required to split their annual fee, fine, and forfeiture revenues as provided in this section until such revenues exceed the following amounts:

County	Amount
Placer	\$ 1,554,677
Riverside	11,028,078
San Joaquin	3,694,810
San Mateo	5,304,995
Ventura	4,637,294

SEC. 3. Section 1463.010 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

1463.010. The enforcement of court orders is recognized as an important element of collections efforts. The prompt, efficient, and effective collection of court-ordered fees, fines, forfeitures, penalties, and assessments ensures the appropriate respect for court orders. To provide for this prompt, efficient, and effective collection:

(a) The Judicial Council shall adopt guidelines for a comprehensive program concerning the collection of moneys owed for fees, fines, forfeitures, penalties, and assessments imposed by court order after considering the recommendations of the collaborative court-county working group established pursuant to subdivision (b). As part of its guidelines, the Judicial Council may establish standard agreements for entities to provide collection services. As part of its guidelines, the Judicial Council shall include provisions that promote competition by and between entities in providing collection services to courts and counties. The Judicial Council may delegate to the Administrative Director of the Courts the implementation of the aspects of this program to be carried out at the state level.

(b) The Judicial Council shall establish a collaborative court-county working group on collections. The California State Association of

Counties shall appoint eight members of the working group. The Judicial Council shall appoint four court executives, two judges, and two employees of the Administrative Office of the Courts as members of the working group, and shall designate a chair of the working group. The working group shall, among other activities, survey courts and counties regarding current collection efforts and evaluate a variety of methods to enhance future collections, including, but not limited to, referring accounts to private agencies for collection, develop a strategy for court and county cooperation in collection plan discussions, consult with groups other than courts and counties that are affected by collection programs, and evaluate and make recommendations to the Judicial Council concerning current and future collection methods.

(c) The courts and counties shall maintain the collection program which was in place on January 1, 1996, unless otherwise agreed to by the court and county. The program may wholly or partially be staffed and operated within the court itself, may be wholly or partially staffed and operated by the county, or may be wholly or partially contracted with a third party. In carrying out this collection program, each superior court and county shall develop a cooperative plan to implement the Judicial Council guidelines. In the event that a court and a county are unwilling or unable to enter into a cooperative plan pursuant to this section, the court or the county may request the continuation of negotiations with mediation assistance as mutually agreed upon and provided by the Administrative Director of the Courts and the California Association of Counties.

(d) Each superior court and county shall jointly report to the Judicial Council, as provided by the Judicial Council and not more than once a year, on the effectiveness of the cooperative superior court and county collection program. The Judicial Council shall report to the Legislature, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the program.

(e) The Judicial Council may, when the efficiency and effectiveness of the collection process may be improved, facilitate a joint collection program between superior courts, between counties, or between superior court and counties.

(f) The Judicial Council may establish, by court rule, a program providing for the suspension and nonrenewal of a business and professional license if the holder of the license has unpaid fees, fines, forfeitures, penalties, and assessments imposed upon them under a court order. The Judicial Council may provide that some or all of the superior courts or counties participate in the program. Any program established by the Judicial Council shall ensure that the licensee receives adequate and appropriate notice of the proposed suspension or nonrenewal of his



or her license and has an opportunity to contest the suspension or nonrenewal. The opportunity to contest may not require a court hearing.

(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Judicial Council, after consultation with the Franchise Tax Board with respect to collections under Section 19280 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, may provide for an amnesty program involving the collection of outstanding fees, fines, forfeitures, penalties, and assessments, applicable either statewide or within one or more counties. The amnesty program shall provide that some or all of the interest or collections costs imposed on outstanding fees, fines, forfeitures, penalties, and assessments may be waived if the remaining amounts due are paid within the amnesty period.

SEC. 4. Notwithstanding Section 17610 of the Government Code, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code. If the statewide cost of the claim for reimbursement does not exceed one million dollars (\$1,000,000), reimbursement shall be made from the State Mandates Claims Fund.

